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Providing
comprehensive
and high quality
health care
since 1972.

CommuniCare celebrates 45 years of keeping health care available for all



Dr. John H. Jones
founded the Davis
Free Clinic in 1972.

When Dr. John H. Jones opened the Davis Free Clinic in the basement of the Friends Meeting House in 1972, it was to fill a need that he saw lacking in the community – free medical care for anyone that needed it. Guided by the principal that healthcare is a right, not a privilege, he and several volunteers in the community provided services for those who had nowhere else to turn to for care.

From our modest start in that small church basement forty-five years ago, CommuniCare has grown to three primary care health centers and five satellite clinics, and today is the provider of comprehensive and high-quality health care services for one in every nine residents of Yolo County – 25,000 patients in the past year - regardless of insurance status or ability to pay. CommuniCare CEO Robin Affrime, who has been with the organization for 33 years, is proud of the continuing commitment we make to the health and wellness of our patients, many of whom are families who have come to our clinics for generations. "We want everyone to know that we are here for you," says Robin. "We have grown up with the community and we provide a full range of services that are tailored to meet the needs of our clients and the community."

CommuniCare's services have expanded to include primary medical and dental care, perinatal services, behavioral health services

and a robust program for treatment for substance use disorders including Medication Assisted Treatment for opioid addiction. Since 2014, CommuniCare has been certified by the National Committee for Quality Assurance as a Patient Centered Medical Home, attaining the highest level of recognition for defining high-quality care by emphasizing access and coordinated care that is focused on our patients.

Throughout our history, CommuniCare's biggest asset has been our staff – from Dr. Jones and the many volunteers who kept the clinic afloat in the early years, to the highly-skilled providers and support staff now working in our clinics and in the community whose diligence helps keep thousands of people healthy. "Our staff reflects the communities and cultures of our patients," says CommuniCare's chief medical officer, Dr. Melissa Marshall. "Many of us do this work because we deeply believe in healthcare access for everyone." For nearly half a century, CommuniCare remains faithful to Dr. Jones' founding vision of access to care for anyone and our dedication to the underlying philosophy that health care is a right and not a privilege.

Learn more about the history of CommuniCare on the web at www.communicarehc.org/about-us/history. ■



Did you know?

CommuniCare has a new website www.communicarehc.org that is bright, informative, easy to navigate, and loaded with new features!

Latest News:

Read interesting articles on your health and wellness, the community, and more.

Our Providers:

Meet the members of our team of healthcare professionals who care all about you!

Job Openings:

Find the complete listing of positions available – join our team!

Online Donations:

Making a secure gift to CommuniCare has never been easier.

Stay informed:

Sign up to receive our newsletters and eblasts by email, or follow us on one of our social media channels. [f](#) [t](#) [in](#) [@](#)

Check us out and keep in contact!



Dr. Betza Kunkel provides both primary care and psychiatric services for MAT patients.

Expanded treatment for opioid addiction

Opioid abuse, overdoses and deaths attributed to opioid addiction – including prescription pain relievers, heroin and synthetic opioids such as fentanyl – has generated a horrifying ripple of suffering and death nationally and our local communities have not been immune. While the opioid crisis in Yolo County has not reached the magnitude of other hard-hit areas, the rate of opioid overdose deaths is higher than the statewide average.

In 2016, CommuniCare was one of 271 community health centers nationwide awarded federal grant funding to expand treatment for substance use disorders, specifically opioid use and addiction in low-income populations. With this funding, CommuniCare began offering Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT), a program that combines medications and primary medical care integrated with substance use counseling and therapy. The MAT model has proven effective for long-term recovery from opioid addiction. This summer, CommuniCare was awarded multi-year state funding to expand MAT services to cover the cost of providing treatment and medications for the uninsured.

“Many of the people we see in our treatment programs have complex needs, health complications and face multiple barriers to accessing care,” says Sara Gavin, Director of CommuniCare’s Behavioral Health Services. “This funding through the state helps our low-income and uninsured clients overcome these barriers by covering the cost of medications, transportation, child-care, substance use treatment and primary medical care as part of our expanded MAT Opioid Addiction program.”

Long before opioid addiction was recognized as a public health crisis and became front page news, CommuniCare was already helping people meet the challenges of recovery from addiction. In fact, treatment for substance use disorders is one of the core services established by Dr. John H. Jones at the time of our founding as the Davis Free Clinic forty-five years ago. Today, CommuniCare is the main provider of outpatient substance use treatment in Yolo County, providing treatment for 1,100 clients last year.

Learn more about CommuniCare’s Behavioral Health Services on the web at www.communicarehc.org/services/behavioral-health-care/. ■



Healer's Art

The health care environment—with its packed work days, demanding pace, time pressures, and emotional intensity—can put physicians, behavioral health clinicians and other health care providers at high risk for burnout. It's a long-term stress reaction marked by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a lack of sense of personal accomplishment and often leads to decreased productivity and a depleted provider staff.

Dr. David Katz, a family practice physician at CommuniCare's Salud Clinic in West Sacramento, recognized the increased risk for burnout among CommuniCare's providers and began a pilot program to address the problem with a unique intervention, the Healer's Art program. Developed over 25 years ago by a professor of family and community medicine at the UCSF School of Medicine, Healer's Art was designed to bolster medical students' commitment to medicine, build supportive community with their classmates, build confidence that they can be a good doctor, and gain clarity about what they can personally offer patients.

Dr. Katz identified Healer's Art as a format that could help CommuniCare's providers address the emotional stress and burnout they experience in the workplace. "I had been working with first year medical students at UCD Medical School and using the Healer's Art format to help them adjust to the stresses and self-

doubts they experience as they become a physician," explains Dr. Katz. "We adapted the program to benefit our providers, addressing the same issues by building trust to share personal experiences. The Healer's Art group creates a safe place for providers to build community among themselves and realize they are not alone in their feelings. Together they share support to regain confidence in their commitment and capabilities as healers." The benefits to providers who have engaged with the program have been promising. "We are truly impressed by the positive impact Healer's Art has made on participants," says Dr. Melissa Marshall, CommuniCare's Chief Medical Officer. "Results show a 28% reduction in feelings of being emotionally drained at work, a 33% reduction in feelings of being burned out, a 54% reduction in feelings of being at the end of their rope, and a 13% increase in feeling more energized."

Reducing stress and burnout benefits are not only for the health and wellness of providers, it also benefits our patients. "When providers are less stressed, they are more able to focus their attention on the needs of the client," explains Tegwin Millard, LMFT, Supervisor of CommuniCare's Integrated Behavioral Health services. "The more we connect with why we are here doing what we do, the more we can connect with touching a life, caring and healing. It comes through in the interactions with our patients."

Healer's Arts has helped build collegiality between providers in CommuniCare's primary care, dental and behavioral health practices as they become more connected and conscious of their shared experiences. "People are able to share feelings that their work at CommuniCare has a spiritual quality that they feel in caring for their patients, adds Dr. Katz. "It's the thing that brings us together as a caring family." ■



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